



## **500.63 School Resource Unit**

Number Series: 500 - Operational  
Approved Date: October 29, 2018  
Review Due Date: October 29, 2021

Sheriff's Approval: Digital  
Review Frequency: 3 Years

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### **POLICY**

Hendry County Sheriff Office will provide Deputy Sheriff's for Law Enforcement and related services under the School Resource Program to Elementary, Middle, High, and Alternative Schools in Hendry County. These officers provide a variety of educational resources to the school community, provide law enforcement information and advice to students and parents, and provide a positive law enforcement presence in the school community. School Resource Officers (SRO) and Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) Officers are not to enforce school disciplinary policies.

All deputies selected as a School Resource Officer (SRO), will successfully complete the 40 hour Advanced Training Program Courses number 090 School Resource Officer, per Florida Administrative Code 11B-35.006. Failure to complete the required training will be grounds for transfer to another duty assignment.

### **PROCEDURE**

#### **A. Duties**

1. The SRO shall coordinate all of his/her activities with the principal and staff members at his/her assigned campus and will seek permission, advice, and guidance prior to enhancing any existing program within the school, or implementing any new program.
2. The SRO shall meet with the principal of his/her assigned school and ascertain which games and after-school activities the principal would like their presence. This should be done as soon as possible at the beginning of the school year so the principal can calculate the overtime hours for each SRO and the possible paid hours.
3. The SRO shall develop expertise in making group presentations on various subjects to students. Such subjects may include a basic understanding of the laws, the role of the law enforcement officer, the School Resource Officer, their missions, and the importance of education and the student's role in obtaining such, by understanding their roles and responsibilities.
4. The SRO shall encourage individual and small group discussions with students based on materials presented in class to further establish rapport with the students. This may also be accomplished by attending the various school-sponsored clubs.
5. When requested by the principal or his/her designee, the SRO shall attend parent/faculty meetings to solicit support and understanding of the SRO program.

- a. The SRO, shall, whenever possible, participate in and/or attend school functions.
- 6. The SRO may make himself/herself available for conferences with students, parents, and faculty in order to assist them with law enforcement or crime reduction initiatives.
- 7. The SRO shall become familiar with all community agencies, which offer assistance to youths and their families, such as mental health clinics, drug treatment centers, etc. The SRO, acting as a resource person to the students, faculty, and staff of the school, shall make referrals when necessary.
- 8. The SRO shall assist the principal in developing plans and strategies to prevent and/or minimize crimes, dangerous situations, etc which may result in student unrest.
- 9. The SRO shall maintain detailed and accurate records of the operation of the School Resource Officer Program and shall, in a timely manner, submit reports of an instructional nature as required by the principal or school staff.
  - a. School Resource Officers participating in any federal or state grant programs shall maintain detailed and accurate records as required by the terms of the grant program.
- 10. The SRO shall notify SRO Supervision and the Communication Center prior to leaving campus.
- 11. The SRO shall coordinate all extracurricular activities and outside overtime work details, both compensatory and paid, with SRO Supervisor.
- 12. The SRO shall report rumors involving gang fights, conflicts, or any major felony to the principal and SRO Supervisor as soon as possible.
- 13. The SRO shall maintain a liaison with local law enforcement agencies and cooperate with them in law enforcement matters.
- 14. The SRO shall adhere to Florida Statutes and all of the agency's policies; especially 500.06: Juvenile Operations and 700.07: School Resource Officer Manual.
- 15. The SRO shall take vacations in conjunction with school holidays and the summer break. Comp time, paid time off, and sick leave will be taken in accordance with policy 300.08: Leave Program Benefits.
- 16. The SRO shall attend training as required by HCSO.
- 17. The SRO shall respond to incidents occurring on their assigned campus during school hours. In the event an SRO is unable to respond, a Road Patrol unit shall be dispatched to handle the incident.
- 18. The SRO shall discuss with the Principal and acquaint themselves with their respective campus's Critical Incident Plan. Any changes shall be forwarded to the SRO Supervisor. Forward any changes as soon as they are noted. This is critical should an incident arise requiring special response measures.
- 19. The SRO may be asked to transport a student for various reasons. If approved by SRO supervisor, the SRO may have an administrator/teacher accompany them. The SRO will follow policy 500.52: Search, Transport, Detention when transporting a student and/or faculty member. **NO SRO WILL TRANSPORT A STUDENT WITH MEDICAL PROBLEMS.**
- 20. The SRO shall notify SRO Supervisor of all out-of county travel to include escorts.
- 21. The SRO may be required to attend the expulsion hearings for students.
- 22. The SRO shall notify SRO Supervisor anytime an offense report is generated, an arrest is made, a Notice to Appear is issued, or Juvenile Court Referral is completed.

23. The SRO shall wear the approved uniform as defined by policy 300.22: Employee Dress Code and Uniform Regulations.
  24. The SRO may be asked to monitor school-parking areas or any other monitoring of activities deemed necessary by the principal. However, the SRO will only assist until the problem is solved. Please note these are issues the schools should be addressing.
    - a. The SRO shall not be assigned designated duties, such as monitoring the Cafeteria, parking lot details, etc by the principal or his/her designee. These are duties for which school administrators are responsible.
- B. Law Enforcement Authority
1. The SRO shall take law enforcement action as required and advise the principal of the school of such action as soon as possible.
    - a. The SRO shall take appropriate action against any intruders or unwanted guests at the school or school-related functions.
    - b. If assistance is called for, the SRO shall notify SRO Supervisor to include requests for EMS, Life Flight, etc.
    - c. The SRO shall immediately respond, without waiting for backup, to reports of unwanted guests, trespassers, disruptions, gunfire, etc. SRO's will notify Communications while enroute to these issues, if applicable. In instances of gunfire on school property or other threats of immediate terrorism, the SRO will retrieve their issued patrol rifle, respond and eliminate the threat, unless loss of life is imminent and it is not practical to retrieve the rifle prior to responding, in which case the SRO will rely on their issued sidearm. Issued Patrol Rifles are to be carried onto school property and stored in the SRO's gun safe on a daily basis for immediate access.
  2. The SRO shall not act as a school disciplinarian. If the principal believes an incident is a violation of the law, the principal may contact the SRO, and the SRO shall determine whether law enforcement action is appropriate.
  3. The SRO shall use good judgment and discretion in enforcing laws. Depending on the severity of the offense, alternative placement such as Juvenile Court, or the referral to School District Disciplinarian should be considered as a viable option. Issuance of Civil Citations must be considered and used if appropriate in accordance to FS 985.12.
  4. The SRO will conduct the discovery interview in Child Abuse complaints that occur on their campus.
    - a. If an Investigator from The Department of Children and Families arrives on campus unaccompanied, the SRO will determine the venue of the occurrence and notify the responsible agency. If the offense occurred within the jurisdiction of the HCSO, the SRO will conduct the discovery interview, notify SRO Supervisor who will forward the investigation to the appropriate division for follow-up.
    - b. If an Investigator from The Department of Children and Families arrives on campus accompanied by another police officer or deputy sheriff, the SRO will not conduct the discovery interview.
- C. Dismissal or Replacement of a SRO
1. In the event that a principal of the school feels that the assigned SRO is not effectively performing his/her duties and responsibilities, the principal may recommend to the Superintendent of Schools that the SRO in question be replaced.

The principal shall state the reasons therefore in writing. In such an event the following procedures shall be implemented:

- a. Within a reasonable time after receiving the recommendation from the principal, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall advise the Sheriff or his designee of the principal's request.
  - b. If the Sheriff or his designee so desires, the Superintendent and the Sheriff or their designees shall meet with the SRO to mediate or resolve any problems which may exist.
  - c. If, within a reasonable amount of time after commencement of such mediation, the problem(s) cannot be resolved or the problem(s) continue, the SRO shall be removed from that particular school or be removed from the division.
  - d. In the event a SRO is removed from a school, a replacement shall be obtained.
2. The Sheriff or his designee may dismiss or reassign a SRO based upon agency rules and regulations or when it is in the best interest of the school, the Sheriff's Office, or the citizens of Hendry County.
3. In the event of the resignation, dismissal, or reassignment of a SRO or in the case of a long term absence by a SRO, the Sheriff's Office shall provide a temporary replacement.

## DEFINITIONS

**DRUG ABUSE RESISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAM (DARE)** – An officer-led series of classroom lessons that teaches children from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade how to resist peer pressure and live productive drug and violence-free lives.

**SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO)** – A sworn law enforcement officer who is responsible for providing security and crime prevention services in the school environment.

## REFERENCES

State/Federal Regulations:

Florida Administrative Code 11B-35.006  
Florida D.A.R.E. Training Program  
Florida Statutes 943.10  
Florida Statutes 985.12  
Florida Statutes 1006.12

CFA:

None

Forms:

None

Other Policy/ Procedure References:

300.08 Leave Program Benefits  
300.22 Employee Dress Code and Uniform Regulations  
500.06 Juvenile Operations  
500.52 Search, Transport, Detention

